



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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Iraq - Community Action Program (CAP)

The Iraq Community Action Program (CAP) is one of the few **community-led** development and reconstruction programs in Iraq funded by the US Agency for International Development. CAP **directly engages Iraqis** in reconstructing their own communities, while building a nation-wide grassroots constituency for democracy.

Since June 2003, the CAP program has created over 1,303 Community Action Groups (CAGs), trained 17,281 CAG members and assisted them to:

- > build/repair **830 schools**;
- > repair **337 roads**;
- > complete **325 water resource projects**;
- > launch **298 health-related initiatives**; and
- > improve **292 electric utility centers**.

The above includes the construction and equipping of modern surgical wards in the al Hillal and al Quasim hospitals, installation of street lighting in multiple neighborhoods of Najaf and the provision of safe, clean drinking water systems in 15 towns in Hilla, Najaf and Karbala provinces. To date, USAID has provided nearly \$258 million to achieve the following goals:

- 1. Democracy Building at the Grassroots Level**
- 2. Restoration of Basic Services**
- 3. Economic Stabilization & Youth Employment**
- 4. Conflict Resolution & Reconciliation**

The CAP methodology encourages communities to organize and elect inclusive and representative neighborhood councils. The councils then lead their members through a transparent and democratic process:

- > prioritizing community needs;
- > identifying projects to be undertaken; and
- > making transparent decisions on the completion and monitoring of the projects.

Based on tests performed on 89 statistically selected sample projects, the CAP achieved 98 percent of its intended outputs, including citizen participation, inter-community cooperation, local government cooperation, local employment generation, and consideration of environmental concerns.

-Jan. 2005 audit report, USAID Regional Inspector General, Baghdad



Residents and Community Association Members enjoy their newly cleaned neighborhood that had previously been overwhelmed by sewage and waste.

1. Democracy Building at the Grassroots Level

The program's process gives Iraqi citizens—from religious and tribal leaders, to members of the business community, to ordinary community members—the opportunity to practice first hand the fundamentals of democracy by planning and implementing their own projects.

Sample Success: In addition to the large number of CAGs that have been created, there are other signs that democracy is taking hold and in some cases spreading beyond the community level:

- > Community groups created under CAP have been responsible for supporting the formation of new non-governmental organizations that serve all of Iraq.
- > In Baghdad, a community group set up the first NGO that serves people with disabilities nationwide.
- > Many former CAG members have gone on to become elected officials in the government.

Program Statistics

CAP has developed a professional cadre of 620 local Iraqi staff

Days of Employment Created	2,907,974
Community Associations Formed	1,303
Community Association Members	17,281
Male/Female ratio of CAG members	51/49
Community Resources Leveraged	US\$37.4 million (14% of total)

CAP is helping over 30,000 Iraqis per day.

Iraq - CAP

program description continued.....

The program ensures that all community stakeholders—particularly women, children, youth, the elderly and those with special needs—are active participants in the process from start to finish.

2. Restoration of Basic Services

The CAP program has restored basic services to communities throughout Iraq by mobilizing them to identify and manage reconstruction works needed in their neighborhood.

Sample Success: Women and newborns were dying during childbirth at an alarming rate in Nahia Al-Abassiya. Due to poor security and the lack of proper roads, most women were unable to travel to the closest hospital 15 kilometers away. The Community Association Group decided to convert a dilapidated building into a birthing clinic, generating US\$6,500 in matching contributions while creating a clean, safe, and permanent clinic for pregnant women that will save the lives of thousands of mothers and babies.

3. Economic Stabilization and Youth Employment

The CAP program is making a significant contribution towards creating a lasting peace by stabilizing local economies through:

- > temporary employment generated by the construction works
- > permanent employment generated by the new development projects
- > contracting exclusively with local Iraqi firms, an investment in expanding the local economy
- > creating an active local construction industry and related economic opportunities.

Sample Success: In an effort to create economic opportunities for young people, CAP has launched a partnership with the Junior Achievement program, which:

- > identifies local Iraqi business volunteers to train youth aged 16-22 in organizing and operating an actual business enterprise.
- > engages youth in productive activities in the emerging economy.

4. Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation

The CAP program is assisting communities to learn several methodologies which resolve long-standing conflicts which have historically existed in many communities due to divisions among tribal and ethnic lines and the competition for scarce resources. The CAP program has trained community groups and their members in methods of peacefully bringing the parties together and finding solutions that are mutually beneficial to all concerned parties.

The CAP program has invested in training several different layers of democratic stakeholders in community organizing and project development skills, while senior provincial and local community leaders have received internationally recognized training in conflict management and essential negotiation skills.



Now residents are able voice their opinions democratically during Community Association meetings throughout Iraq.

Iraq - CAP Partners



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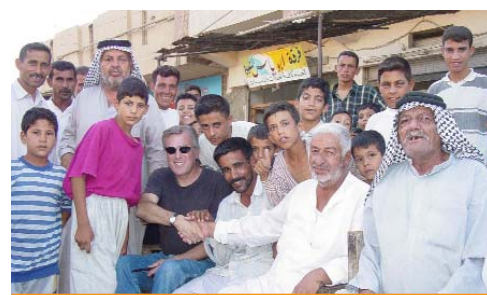
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Communities throughout Iraq have embraced their CAP partners, thus establishing hope for future generations.